

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022

Statement on the Delaware Legislature's Passage of an Assault Weapons Ban and Other Gun Safety Legislation

June 17, 2022

In the wake of the horrific massacres in Buffalo, New York, and Uvalde, Texas, the families of the fallen had one message for all of us: Do something. Do something to prevent this carnage and make our communities safer. I again called for a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, stronger background checks, and a host of other commonsense measures to protect our fellow Americans.

I'm proud that my home State of Delaware—"the First State"—has become one of the very first States in recent weeks to answer that call and take decisive action to reduce gun violence. Yesterday the Delaware State legislature passed a historic assault weapons ban, strict limits on high-capacity magazines, and legislation to significantly improve background checks. The Legislature has also taken up several other critical gun safety bills, including a bill to make it easier to hold gun manufacturers accountable for how they market and sell weapons of war.

These are reasonable measures, supported by the vast majority of Americans. And they work. In the decade after Congress passed the 1994 ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines—with bipartisan support in Congress and the backing of law enforcement—mass shootings went down. But after Republicans let the law expire in 2004 and those weapons were allowed to be sold again, mass shootings tripled. Those are the facts, and they should inspire us to action.

I have already taken more executive action to curb gun crime than any other President during their first year in office. States like Delaware, thanks to the leadership of Governor John Carney and the State Legislature, continue to lead the way in protecting their people. But a national crisis demands a national response, and it's past time for Congress to do the right thing. As a step in the right direction, I urge the United States Senate to pass a meaningful bipartisan gun safety bill without delay. This is an issue of conscience and common sense. We must meet this moment.

Categories: Statements by the President : Assault weapons ban and other gun safety legislation, Delaware Legislature passage.

Names: Carney, John C., Jr.

Subjects: Congress : Bipartisanship; Delaware : Assault weapons ban and gun control legislation; Delaware : Governor; Law enforcement and crime : Gang violence, prevention efforts; Law enforcement and crime : Gun control.

DCPD Number: DCPD202200539.